

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Life in globalization era is characterized by the quick development in science and technology in order not to be left behind by development in science and technology, people try to equip themselves with enough information about science and technology through many kinds of ways such as though reading printed material, listening to the radio and watching television.

In many countries, foreign language is learned by number of students, who have no chance to speak with a native speaker but have access to written foreign language literature. They will need these publications to assist them in their work. English is one of foreign languages in Indonesia, which taught in Indonesia from elementary school until university. Due to the important of English, the Indonesian government adopts English as the first foreign language in Indonesia. In this case, the use of English is clearly needed as a means of communication with other countries in the world, not only science and technology but also in other aspects of life, such as culture, tourism, education, commercial, business and politics.

However, it is understood that most of the information is presented in printed material. Reading, then, plays a very important role. By reading people can absorb a lot of information, since much information can be gained from

books, magazines, newspaper, and bulletins. It can be assumed that the success of obtaining information depends on reading itself. Reading, as one of the four important skills in learning language, is a cognitive process of interaction with printed material. In this interacting process, one is undergoing a stream of comprehension by which he gets the meaning or understands the information contained in the printed material. Reading not only assigns foreign language sounds to written words, but it also requires the comprehension of what is written. Comprehension here is meaningful interpretation of printed or written symbols or words that require a combination of word recognition, intellect, and emotion interrelated with prior knowledge. Word recognition means knowledge of vocabulary one should have in order to be able to understand the printed or written words of the target language. One who does not master enough English vocabulary tends to face difficulties when comprehending new reading materials.

Valette says as quoted by Kustaryo (1988:3) that “The ability to understand the target language greatly depends on one’s knowledge of vocabulary, vocabulary in the broader sense. This proves that a student who does not know English vocabulary fairly well will have problems when facing new reading materials which are more complex than those at high schools.”

Consequently, reading seems to be very important in a modern society today. Certain people read for getting information, while some other do not read for the sake of information only, but also for enjoyment. There are two main reasons for reading, namely reading for pleasure and reading for

information in order to find out something or in order to do something with the information we get (Grellet, 1998:4).

The Indonesian Government is very concerned with the goal of English teaching, especially that of developing of students' reading skill. The School Based-Curriculum for senior high school states that English is a means of transferring idea, thought, point of view and feeling in the way the native speaker does, and is a tool to get and develop knowledge and also culture. In Senior High School, English must be implemented as a teaching material and as a means of improving the student's knowledge, technology and art. The goal of English teaching is to develop the four major language skills, i.e. reading, listening, speaking, and writing through themes which are selected in accordance with interest, vocabulary and corresponding structure. The four language skills are presented, integrated and stressed on the reading skill. The government has provided English textbooks to be used as compulsory material in senior high school. The material is planned and arranged in accordance with the School Based-Curriculum. The government has also given professional training to English teachers that relates to the product knowledge and other teaching techniques.

Reading skills is put into high stress in the School Based-Curriculum in SMA Negeri 1 Grobogan. While in understanding reading material needs good mastery of vocabulary. Building reading skill in senior high school is presented through genre texts like descriptive text, narrative text, discussion text, explanation text, etc. The writer then, think that the better students

vocabulary mastery the better the students reading competency.

Reading classes in senior high school have given no definite assessment of students' reading competence. Here and there, students are faced with their own obstacles that hinder their speed in understanding reading materials. Most students complain that it is the difficulty in understanding words or vocabularies. They cannot fill the complete information from reading materials because they lack vocabulary.

In many senior high schools in Grobogan regency, the main problem of understanding and comprehending reading texts faced by most students is the lackness words they have already mastered. They felt the words of the texts were new and therefore they didn't know their meanings. And so they couldn't comprehend the text. This problem caused failure in every reading comprehension test.

The writer has been trying to provide better ways to develop the students' reading skill. There are many others who spend their time researching and investigating the correlation between mastery of vocabulary and reading comprehension, and also finding out solutions for the students' complaints. Many teachers' teaching proficiency has also been improved through professional training. However, these issues have not given any better contribution to the students' reading comprehension. Based on the explanation above, the writer tries to describe the correlation between students' English vocabulary mastery and students' reading comprehension by the title "The

Correlation between English Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Comprehension of the Third Year Students of SMA Negeri 1 Grobogan”.

B. Limitation of the Study

This study has aboard scope and it is impossible for the writer to handle all problems that may arise. The writer focuses on the analysis on the relationship between students’ English vocabulary mastery and students’ reading comprehension. Subject of the students’ vocabulary mastery and the object of the study is the students’ reading comprehension.

The students on this research are the third year students of SMA Negeri 1 Grobogan who are still in the first semester of 2010/2011 academic year.

C. Problem Statement

The problem that the writer wants to solve in this study is “is there any correlation between the students’ vocabulary mastery and the students’ reading comprehension of the third year students of SMA Negeri 1 Grobogan?”

D. Objective of the Study

The objective of this research is to find out the correlation between the students’ vocabulary mastery and the students’ reading comprehension of the third year students of SMA Negeri 1 Grobogan.

E. Benefit of the Study

The researcher expects that this research will be able to give some benefits, both the theoretical and practical:

1. Theoretical Benefit

The finding of the research may verify the validity of the theories that is vocabulary mastery can increase the reading comprehension.

2. Practical Benefit

- a. The writer hopes that this research gives information that vocabulary mastery can help teachers and students in teaching and learning to comprehend reading.
- b. The result of this study is expected to be able to be used as a consideration whether vocabulary mastery can be neglected or not in reading the text. In reading a text the person's vocabulary mastery is a great help in enabling him to guess the meaning from the content and it will influence the capacity of the reader in comprehending the passage.

F. Research Paper Organization

This research paper consists of five chapters. The first chapter is introduction, covering background of the study, limitation of the study, problem statement, objective of the study, benefit of the study, research paper organization. The second chapter is the underlying theory that is previous study, reading comprehension, vocabulary mastery, curriculum review, and hypothesis. The third chapter deals with research method which are consist of type of research, subject and object of the study, data and data source,

variable, population, sample and sampling, method of collecting data, technique of analyzing data. Chapter fourth is research finding and discussion of research findings. Chapter fifth presents conclusion, implication, and suggestion based on the discussion of the research finding.